REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is requested. Claims 1-7 will be active in the application subsequent to entry of this Amendment.

The claims have been amended in order to more particularly point out and distinctly claim that which applicants regard as their invention, to direct them to preferred aspects of the disclosure and to address issues raised as to claim clarity in the Official Action.

Claim 1 has been amended to include additional features as shown in Figure 3(a) of the drawings and in the associated description of the drawings on pages 12 and 13 of the specification. The oxidation reactor in claim 1 now also includes a manhole nozzle 50 which is provided on the reactor body-side end portion of the nozzle. The stopper projects inwardly from an inner surface of the manhole nozzle and is arranged on the reactor side of the manhole nozzle. The stopper 50 provides a stopper for the partition plate 52 as shown in the drawings in Figure 3(a). The amendments made to claim 1 will be apparent from the description of the invention given in Figure 3(a) and the associated discussion in the specification.

Claim 2 has been amended to specify that the inert gas is fed into the manhole nozzle (not the reactor) as will be apparent from Figure 3(a) as well, thus removing and resolving item 3 of the Official Action as to claim clarity.

The advantages provided by the arrangement of the stop and partition plate are discussed on page 14 of the specification, again with reference to the drawings. In this particular arrangement the oxidation reactor 10, 20 with the inside of the manhole nozzle 50 closed by a partition plate 52 there are no deep recesses or depressions from the inner surface of the reactor body 10A or 20A of the oxidation reactor. This means, as a practical matter, the reaction gas within the reactor body is not inhibited in its flow or locally retained in the reactor body and thus prevents automatic oxidation of acrolein.

Nor is this arrangement described or disclosed in the applied prior art.

Claims 1-5 and 7 were rejected as being anticipated by JP 53-94940 and also rejected as being obvious over the disclosures of the JP citation when considered in combination with U.S. 3,759,087.

In the above claim amendments, claims 9-14 have been withdrawn thereby reducing issues.

The arrangement described in the JP reference is considerably different from that described and defined by applicants' amended claims. In particular it will be noted that there is a substantial distance between the reactor surface 1A and the inner seal 4 in Figure 1 of that reference. This is not the case in the present application and the benefits of the arrangement are as discussed above. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the prior art-based rejections are appropriate and are requested.

The Official Action also includes a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection over claims 1 and 9 of co-pending application Serial No. 11/586,691 which shares as its parent the same application as the present one. Although not indicated in the rejection itself, as stated in item 6 of the Official Action, it is or should be a provisional rejection because the claims in this application nor the claims in the co-pending have not been found to be allowable.

In fact, the concern expressed by the examiner is no longer pertinent for in the co-pending application claims 16-20 were elected for purposes of examination in a response filed July 2, 2007. These are not among the claims listed by the examiner in the present application as being of potential concern. Counsel also notes that the co-pending application is pending before Examiner Zucker in Art Unit 1621. Withdrawal of the double patenting rejection is appropriate considering the circumstances discussed above.

Reconsideration and favorable action are requested. Should the examiner require further information, please contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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